

# Joint George Mason/Mary Ellen Henderson Campus Steering Committee

## MINUTES

SEPTEMBER 4, 2014

7:30AM

DOGWOOD ROOM, CITY HALL

<b>IN ATTENDANCE</b>	
	David Tarter, Mayor (DT) David Snyder, Vice Mayor (DS) Susan Kearney, School Board Chair (SK) John Lawrence, School Board Member (JL) Ruth Rodgers, Planning Commission Chair (RR) Michael Novotny, EDA (MN) Wyatt Shields, City Manager (WS) Toni Jones, Superintendent of Schools (TJ)
<b>OTHERS PARTICIPATING</b>	<div style="background-color: black; height: 1em; width: 100%;"></div> Susan Bell, Consultant (SB) Doug McCoach, RTKL (DM) Justin Castillo, School Board Alternate (JC)
<b>DOCUMENTS/ RESOURCES</b>	
<b>INVITED GUESTS</b>	RTKL – Doug McCoach, Kenneth Wong, Associate Dean of the Northern Virginia Center Bob Branson Director of Regional Outreach, for UVA

## Agenda

4A: 7:30AM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RTKL Presentation of Findings – Initial Phase 3 – TEST FIT</li> </ul>
4B: 8:00AM	ULI-TAP Agenda, Briefing Book, Essential Questions
4C:	Ongoing Project / Action Item Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ALTA Survey</li> <li>Report on Additional Expertise Needed as Determined by City Staff</li> </ul>
4D:	Discussion re: September 16 meeting.

## Discussion and Recommendations (By Speaker)

Agenda	Speaker	
4A	DM	RTKL has been asked by the SC to sub-divide the project deliverable and we will see some the beginning of that work with today's presentation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Basic school program assumptions have not changed</li> <li>Site access – from Haycock and Broad are critical as well as access around the school (future).</li> <li>Access to the interior of the site is a challenge. A public or private road could improve conditions.</li> <li>Should be looking at use/purpose of the Metro access road to allow for feeding of the north end of the site.</li> <li>Slide 9, three blue arrows show how critical a study of traffic (vehicle and pedestrian) will be to the project.</li> <li>Introduce notion of extending bike access from Park to the school site.</li> <li>Showed various HS/MS conjoined options.</li> <li>Emerging directions; financial benefits from 30% allocation justifies cost increase for required vertical development of school; as HS increases vertically there is a corresponding reduction in site required for school; makes sense to migrate non-academic uses off site (bus storage, mulch/transfer site) as this site is looking to a higher level of use; to increase the school to 2,000 would have implications that require additional site resources.</li> <li>Presented 6 options.</li> </ul>
	JL	Is there VDOT incentive to option 3B?
	DM	Traffic study may help Falls Church keep it "neutral" for VDOT/WMATA.
	MN	Additional consideration for discussion with WMATA regarding "bus only" lanes needed.
	DS	There is a threshold question about how SC "labels" this presentation so that it does not inhibit future creative thinking. It should be characterized as "information" and "data". Showing a "win-win" between the City and the universities should not be "universities expanding and our site being used for parking." Need to understand that there is a very significant cost to underground parking. Estimated that maybe as much as a 15M judgment to do it that way. There is value to transportation study, access is critical, but does not want transportation to drive development. It should be the other way around.
	JS	There are other possibilities for the south/east of Rt 7 property (Gordon Rd), both for development and potential to move some aspects off-site. Think multi-mode transportation.

	JC	Stress on neighboring jurisdictions, including traffic on Rt. 7. Potential for MEH expansion exists in all options?(Response from DM, "yes").
	SK	Schools have to figure out how many parking spaces are truly needed. Design strategies for encouraging other modes.
	DT	We need to know the tangle of roads around the site – what is public, what is private, do we have a right to use it? What is the acreage we are talking about with regard to roads and does it eat up development acreage. Are we taking into consideration how much square footage the roads will take up and does it shrink school space. Is it possible for us to consider other uses of site that include additional "educational" use that is not school use but counts toward the 70%.
	MN	Option 1A – and 1B seem to be very problematic because of the phasing. Wants to understand if they are even viable while continuing to operate a school. Wants someone assigned to investigate plans/costs, feasibility so we know whether to continue to include these options. Are we going to start looking at a test fit of proposed school facilities? It would be helpful to figure out how realistic some of these footprints are.
	JL	Bigger concern for phasing is how does a "wrap" impact the existing middle school.
	SK	This is a school staff issue to explore but a temporary disruption on a 50 year use shouldn't preclude the option if it is the best option.
	DT/SK	So the next question is "where do we go from here?"
		Uva/VaTech – Mr. Branson (UVa) indicated tremendous interest in where they take the center in the long run. They are having a quarterly meeting next Friday. This will be a tale of 3-4 cities, including Richmond, Charlottesville and Blacksburg; and budget cutbacks to both UVa and VaTech are anticipated. Mr. Wong – what is the idea of the added "academic" building shown on university site? (Response from DM – simply a placeholder, diagrammatic example of what could work there, how the university site could grow).
	MN	Does University have approval for a second building already?
	JS	Believes there is an approved 3 building and 5 story garage site plan.
		Mr. Branson (UVa) Appreciates being involved now as it helps them expand their discussion topics.
	WS	Will send RTKL the approved site plan for University site.
	RR	Keep in mind there needs to be some hanging out space at the school site.
	DS	Next steps – we are currently fundamentally looking at school footprint. Incumbent on the City to come up with what additional inputs and expertise are needed. 1. What do the schools do with RTKL report? 2. City needs to define its needs with respect to commercial.
	DT	Began discussion of joint CC/SB worksession.
	SK	First task question was "can we build the school and use 30%?" Thinks that has been answered affirmatively. Be clear that this is very conceptual but we do have the land and there are opportunities. It is time to pause the school part and turn to the commercial part. Joint presentation, school board will assess further RTKL needs.
	WS	For the whole package to start to come together the decision about what piece provides highest and best yield and in what time frame must be made. On the northern side it could be years before our neighbors would know.
	MN	EDC has a financial model for every new development. EDC office and RTKL work together between now and next meeting and be prepared to start that discussion/analysis.
	DT	Concerned that we start generating "numbers" before the TAP gets started. Doesn't object to beginning some very rough number sketches but would need to be clear.
	DM	There is a geometrical study that still needs to be done to ensure these parcels actually fit before turning it over to TAP. At least from a land use configuration RTKL could use more time. There are certain metrics about parcel size that can accommodate certain uses. The diagrams have inherent assumptions that still need tightened up.
	JL	There are 500 spaces on the site now, we are doubling school size, etc but we are not expanding parking at all if we plan for only 500.
	JC	Traffic study has been mentioned often. When does that occur?
	DT	Suggests that traffic study may occur after TAP results.
	SB	Draft agenda for TAP. October 16 presentation, please put on your calendar, 5pm. 30-45 minute presentation and q/a to follow.
	DT	ULI-TAP items from this meeting will be moved to next SC meeting.
	DS	What can we do that will be different from, yet commercially viable, from Tyson's Corner? Something that reflects how our community is different. Fear that we get "whatever we can sell today". How to we encourage out-of-the-box thinking by them?
	SK	9/25 RTKL back with SC. Joint cc/sb worksession to follow Oct 6 or 7 or 8. Staff will confirm.
	DT	9/11 discuss ULI-TAP.
		No decision on dates. Future dates will be determined.

## Action Items

Item	Assigned to:	Date Assigned
Determine additional expertise needed (commercial, transportation, etc).	CITY STAFF	8/14/14
Invite Supervisor Foust (or staff) to attend 8/21/14 meeting.	JL	8/14/14
Commission ALTA Survey	CITY STAFF	8/14/14

 Task Completed  In Progress From Previous Meetings

Potential Action Items (Discussed, not designated)

Item	Assigned to:	Delivery